

TOP SECRET

8 AUG
1963

25X1

WORKING PAPER

Comas-D-26
series

SUBJECT: Classification of Overhead Reconnaissance
Target Lists

25X1

1. The United States Government has not admitted at the
SECRET level that it is engaged in an overflight reconnaissance program
of any foreign area other than Cuba.

25X1

2. Any target or list of targets for overflight reconnaissance
on any areas except for U-2 coverage of Cuba and China, which is issued by
the United States Government must protect our programs at the proper
codeword classifications. Issuance of a list at the SECRET level is a
violation of the above previously indicated position in any instance where
either the nature of the targets or their frequent updating indicates an
overflight reconnaissance program. Any publication which appears in
series and shows changes in the overhead reconnaissance target list
invites a conclusion that intelligence has been gained by some means
(not necessarily reconnaissance, but not excluding reconnaissance) when
it includes frequent and well-based additions, deletion, s or changes
in priority. At a minimum to those privy to all forms of collection
excepting overflight reconnaissance, it almost certainly points to the

25X1

Copy 5 of 20

25X1

TOP SECRET

[Redacted]
TOP SECRET

25X1

existence of such reconnaissance. Such speculation would also point to satellite reconnaissance insofar as any such individual were to take note of the guarded information published about the majority of U. S. satellite launch activities. In this connection reference is made to sanitization and downgrading regulations. Both of these recognized the need for release of material to the SECRET level but also paid heed to the question of timeliness--meaning not too soon-- and on the availability of a cover story.

3. Because of the foregoing reasoning, it is deemed that the security of the United States programs designed for the reconnaissance of denied areas will definitely be jeopardized by the publication of COMOR target lists at the SECRET level.

Briefing Note for Chairman, COMOR:

A lesser hazard is represented in the monthly updating of the PROL. Even though COMOR numbers may not be cited, the number of changes made to Sino-Soviet bloc targets each month indicate successful intelligence collection way beyond the capacity of non-overhead reconnaissance sources.

by note 5

[Redacted] * SA/20 S+T files

25X1

25X1

25X1

TOP SECRET